



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 38
Issue 929

"The God of All Comfort"

Part 3

by — Hannah Whitall Smith (1832–1911)

Key Points:

All the unrest of life comes from not understanding God as actually and truly being Father. 7849
God could have never created earthly fathers and mothers more tender and loving than he is himself. 7851
God, if He is a Father at all, He must be the very best of

Fathers! 7852
God loves us as much as he loves Christ..... 7853
The remedy for discomfort and unrest is to be found in becoming acquainted with the Father. 7856

He Spoke to Them of The Father

They understood not that He spoke to them of the Father (John 8:27).

One of the most illuminating names of God is the one especially revealed by our Lord Jesus Christ, the name of "Father." I say "especially" revealed by Christ, because, while God had been called throughout the ages by many other names, expressing other aspects of His character, Christ alone has revealed Him to us under the all-inclusive name of Father – a name that holds within itself all other names of wisdom and power, and above all of love and goodness, a name that embodies for us a perfect supply for all of our needs.

Christ, who was the only begotten Son in the bosom of the Father, was the only One Who could reveal this name, for He alone knew the Father. "As the Father knoweth Me,"¹ He said, "even so know I the Father" "Not that any man hath seen the Father save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father."²

In the Old Testament God was not revealed as the Father so much as a great warrior fighting for His people, or as a mighty king ruling over them and car-

ing for them. The name of Father is given to Him only a very few times there, six or seven times at the most; while in the New Testament it is given about two or three hundred times. Christ, Who knew Him, was the only One Who could reveal Him. "No man," He said, "knoweth who the Father is, but the Son, and He to whom the Son will reveal Him."³

The vital question then that confronts each one of us is, do we in the least understand what the word means? Have we even so much as an inkling of what the Father is?

All of the discomfort and unrest of life, I feel sure, come from this very thing, that God is not understood as actually and truly being Father. He is thought of as a stern Judge, or a severe Taskmaster, or at the best as an unapproachable dignitary, seated on a far-off throne, dispensing exacting laws for a frightened and trembling world. In terror, many, lest they should fail to meet His requirements, hardly know which way to turn. But how many have no conception of a God Who is a Father, tender, and loving,

(see COMFORT, page 7851)

3. Luke 10:22.

1. John 10:15.
2. John 6:46.

"The God of All Comfort" (part 3)7849
Our Mailbox.....7856



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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the absolute sovereignty and deity of God (Romans 11:36);
- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all through the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the universality of death and resurrection (I Corinthians 15:21);
- the unique gospel of Paul – which he calls "my gospel" (Romans 2:16; 16:25; II Timothy 2:8; I Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 13-28; Acts 20:24);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past" (Romans 16:25);
- the epistles of the present Secret Administration being Ephesians & Colossians (Ephesians 3:2, 9; Colossians 1:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the One Body (Ephesians 4:16);
- the Secret Administration, being the operational revelation for today (Ephesians 3:9);
- the unprophesied, Celestial hope and calling of the One Body (Colossians 3:4);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 3:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
 - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);

- union in His death, burial and resurrection and ascended seated position among the celestials (Romans 6; Ephesians 2:6);
- adult sonship position (Ephesians 1:5).

This publication is the product of humble efforts of ordinary men intended to stimulate the earnest study of Scripture. We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication; thus they are not meant to imply finality on any subject discussed, or that further research would not add further light from the Word of God. God's storehouse of truth is inexhaustible, so draw on its wealth by prayerful study. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

We are always open for discussion, but never for disputation. – André Sneidar

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and full of compassion, a God Who, like a father, will be on their side against the whole Universe?

I am not afraid to say that discomfort and unrest are impossible to the souls that come to know that God is their real and actual Father.

Before I go any farther, I must make it plain that it is a Father, such as our highest instincts tell us a good father ought to be, of Whom I am speaking. Sometimes earthly fathers are unkind, or tyrannical, or selfish, or even cruel, or they are merely indifferent and neglectful; but none of these can by any stretch be called good fathers. But God, Who is good, must be a good Father or not a father at all.

We must all of us have known good fathers in this world, or at least can imagine them. I knew one, and he filled my childhood with sunshine by his most lovely fatherhood. I can remember vividly with what confidence and triumph I walked through my days, absolutely secure in the knowledge that I had a father. I am very sure that I have learned to know a little about the perfect fatherhood of God, because of my experience with this lovely earthly father.

God is not only a Father, He is a Mother as well,⁴ and

4. [Editor:] The prophet Isaiah describes God as a woman in labor (42:14) and as a mother who nurses and comforts her child (66:10-13). Jesus compares God to a mother hen who gathers her children under the safety of her wings (Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34).

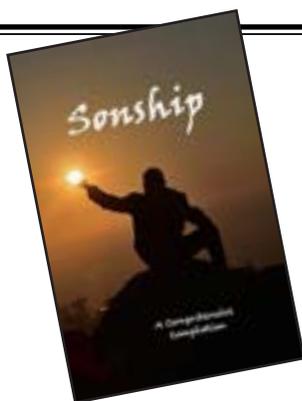
The term "Almighty God" is the Hebrew *El Shaddai*. Interestingly, the root of *Shaddai*, is *shad*, meaning "breast." The Scofield Reference Bible has the following note for Genesis 17:1:

we have all of us known mothers whose love and tenderness have been without bound or limit. It is very certain that the **God Who created them both, and Who is Himself Father and Mother in one, could never have created earthly fathers and mothers who were more tender and more loving than He is Himself.** Therefore, if we want to know what sort of a Father He is, we must heap together all of the best of all the fathers and mothers we have ever known or can imagine, and we must tell ourselves that this is only a faint image of God, our Father in Heaven.

When our Lord was teaching His disciples how to pray, the only name by which He taught them to address God was, "Our Father which art in Heaven."⁵ This surely meant that we were to think of Him in only this light. Millions upon millions of times during all of the centuries since then has this name been uttered by the children of God everywhere; yet how much has it been understood? Had all who used the name known what it meant, it would have been im-

The qualifying word *Shaddai* is formed from the Hebrew word "shad," the breast, invariably used in Scripture for a woman's breast; for example, Genesis 49:25; Job 3:12; Psalm 22:9; Song of Solomon 1:13; 4:5; 7:3, 7-8; 8:1, 8, 10; Isaiah 28:9; Ezekiel 16:7. *Shaddai* therefore means primarily "the breasted." God is *Shaddai*, because He is the Nourisher, the Strength-giver, and so, in a secondary sense, the Satisfier... As a fretful, unsatisfied babe is not only strengthened and nourished from the mother's breast, but also is quieted, rested, satisfied, so *El Shaddai* is that name of God which sets Him forth as the Strength-giver and Satisfier ... It is on every account to be regretted that *Shaddai* was translated "Almighty." The primary name *El* or *Elohim* sufficiently signifies almightiness. "All-sufficient" would far better express both the Hebrew meaning and the characteristic use of the name in Scripture.

5. Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2.



102 pp.

See [order form](#) under "Compilations."

Sonship: A Comprehensive Compilation

The Romans 9 "sonship" is the exclusive prerogative of "Israel according to the flesh," the Galatians 4 "sonship" extends to the spiritual seed of Abraham who are not "after the flesh" (:23), but was associated with "Jerusalem which is above" (:26). However, the Ephesians "sonship" has no relationship whatsoever to Abraham or Israel. It has no connection with the promises made unto the fathers, it is not founded on an earthly inheritance (allotment). The Ephesians "sonship" extends back before the disruption of the world, and extends "far above" all heavens. These three "sonship" distinctions correspond to the three distinct spheres of blessing. This book contains 14 works from 10 authors, spanning 100 years.

Authors include: Tom Ballinger, John H. Essex (1907-1991), M. Jaegle, A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., George L. Rogers (1869-1947), Russell H. Schaefer (1919-1999), C.R. Stam (1909-2003) and Charles H. Welch (1880-1967).

possible for the misrepresentations of His character, and the doubts of His love and care, that have so desolated the souls of His children, to have crept in.

Tyranny, unkindness and neglect might perhaps be attributed to a God Whose name was only a king, or a judge, or a lawgiver; but of a God, Who is before all else a Father, and, of necessity, since He is God, a good Father, no such things could possibly be believed.

God must in the very nature of things act, always and under all circumstances, as a good father ought to act, and never in any other way. It is inconceivable that a good father could forget, or neglect, or be unfair to his children. A savage father might, or a wicked father; but a good father never! **And in calling our God by the blessed name of "Father," we ought to know that, if He is a father at all, He must be the very best of fathers,** and His fatherhood must be the highest ideal of fatherhood of which we can conceive.

It is, as I have said, a fatherhood that combines both father and mother in one, in our highest ideals of both, and comprises all of the love, and all of the tenderness, and all of the compassion, and all of the yearning, and all of the self-sacrifice, that we cannot but recognize to be the inmost soul of parentage, even though we may not always see it carried out by all earthly parents.

But you may say, what about the other names of God, do they not convey other and more terrifying ideas?

They only appear to do so because this blessed name of "Father" is not added to them. This name must underlie every other name by which He has ever been known. Has He been called a Judge? Yes, but He is a Father-Judge, one Who judges as a loving father would. Is He a King? Yes, but He is a King Who is at the same time the Father of His subjects, and Who rules them with a father's tenderness. Is He a Lawgiver? Yes, but He is a Lawgiver who gives laws as a father would, remembering the weakness and ignorance of His helpless children.

*Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.*⁶

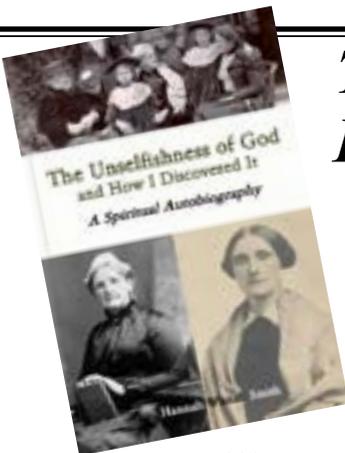
It is not "as a judge judges, so the Lord judges"; not "as a taskmaster controls, so the Lord controls"; not "as a lawgiver imposes laws, so the Lord imposes laws"; but, *as a father pitieth, so the Lord pitieth.*"

Never, never must we think of God in any other way than as "our Father."⁷ All other attributes with which we endow Him in our conceptions must be based upon and limited by this one of "our Father." What a good father could not do, God, Who is our Father, cannot do either; and what a good father ought to do, God, Who is our Father, is absolutely sure to do.

In our Lord's last prayer in John 17, He says that He

6. Psalm 103:13.

7. Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:3; II Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; 4:20; Colossians 1:2; I Thessalonians 1:2-3; 3:11, 13; II Thessalonians 1:1-2; 2:16; I Timothy 1:2; Philemon 1:3.



The Unselfishness of God and How I Discovered It

The autobiography of Hannah Whitall Smith (1832–1911)

Smith was the author of the famed *A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life* (1875). She was influential in the "higher life" and "holiness" movements. Remarkably, she would come to see and embrace the *salvation of all*. She included a description of this journey and understanding in this autobiography published in 1903.

Not surprisingly, her autobiography would subsequently be republished, but with her accounts of coming to the conviction of the *salvation of all* having been removed. This publication is the complete and unabridged facsimile of the original edition.

322 pp.

See [order form](#) under "Biographies."

has declared to us the name of the Father in order that we may discover the wonderful fact that the Father loves us as He loved His Son.

*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.*⁸

Now, which one of us really believes this? We have read this chapter and yet do we any of us believe that it is an actual, tangible fact, that **God loves us as much as He loved Christ**? If we believed this to be actually the case, could we, by any possibility, ever linger on an anxious thought again? Would not knowing that the divine Father, Who loves us just as much as He loved His only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, produce assurance and comfort under every conceivable circumstance?

It is very striking that He said, "**Your** heavenly Father;"⁹ not mine only, but yours just as much, "cares for the sparrows and the lilies, and of course, therefore, He will care for you who are of so much more value than many sparrows."¹⁰ How supremely foolish it is then for us to be worried and anxious about things, when Christ has said that our heavenly Father knows that we have need of all these things!¹¹ For of course, being a good father, He must in the very nature of the case, when He knows our need, supply it.

Again, our Lord draws the comparison between earthly fathers and our heavenly Father, in order to show us, not how much less good and tender is our

heavenly Father, but how much more. "If ye, being evil," He says, "know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things."¹²

I fear, there are a great many of God's children who actually think that their heavenly Father is cruel. Perhaps these very people may belong to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, a society which is the nation's protest against such behavior on the part of earthly fathers; and yet they never have thought of the dreadful wickedness of charging their heavenly Father with things which they are banded together to punish in earthly fathers! Why do they do so? There can be only one answer, and that is, that we do not know the Father.

We are told that we are of the "household of God."¹³ Now the principle is announced in the Bible that if any man provides not for his own household, he has "denied the faith and is worse than an infidel."¹⁴ Since then we are of the "household of God," this principle applies to Him, and if He should fail to provide for us, His own words would condemn Him. I say this reverently, but I want to say it emphatically, for so few seem to have realized it.

It was in my own case a distinct era of immense importance when I first discovered this fact of the *responsibility* of my Father in Heaven. As it were, in a single moment, the burden of life was lifted off my shoulders and laid on His, and all my fears, and anxieties, and questionings dropped into the abyss of His

8. John 17:26.

9. Matthew 6:26.

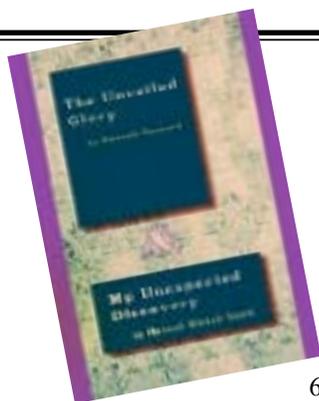
10. Mark 10:31; 12:7.

11. Matthew 6:32; Luke 12:30.

12. Matthew 7:11; Luke 11:13.

13. Ephesians 2:19.

14. I Timothy 5:8.



See [order form](#) under "Other Authors."

64 pp.

The Unveiled Glory

— Hannah Hurnard (1905-1990)

and

My Unexpected Discovery

— Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911)

Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) was the author of the classic work, *A Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*. Both famous Christian authors discuss their coming to see and embrace the salvation of all.

loving care. I saw that the instinct of humanity, which demands that the parents who bring a child into the world are bound by every law, both human and divine, to care for and protect that child according to their best ability, is a divinely implanted instinct; and that it is meant to teach us the magnificent fact that the Creator, Who has made human parents responsible toward their children, is Himself equally responsible toward His children. I could have shouted for joy! From that glad hour the root of my troubles was over. For when this insight comes to a soul, that soul may, in the very nature of things, enter into rest.

With such a God, Who is at the same time a Father, there is no real room for anything but rest. When temptations of doubt or anxiety or fear come to me, I have learned not to listen to them, because I have seen that to do so would be to cast a doubt on the trustworthiness of my Father in Heaven.

If God is our Father, the only thing faith can do with doubts, and fears, and anxious thoughts is to cast them off. For faith sees that God is in very truth our Father, and rejects every doubt to the contrary with horror, as being a libel on our Father's love and our Father's care.

What more can any soul want than to have a God Whose name is "our Father," and Whose character and ways match His name? As Philip said, so we find it to be, "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us."¹⁵ It does indeed suffice, beyond what words can express!

"Behold," says the apostle John, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."¹⁶ The "manner of love" be-

stowed upon us is the love of a father for his son, a tender protecting love that knows our weakness and our need, and cares for us accordingly. He treats us as sons, and faith sees Him as a Father Whom we can trust without anxiety. Yes, faith takes the son's place of dependence and trust, and leaves the father's place of care and responsibility to Him.

Too often we take upon our own shoulders the father's part. But no good earthly father would want his children to take upon their young shoulders the burden of his duties, and surely much less would our heavenly Father want to lay upon us the burden of His.

No wonder Peter wrote, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you."¹⁷ He cares for us; of course He does. It is His business, as a Father, to do so. He would not be a good Father if He did not. The children of a good, human father are at peace because they trust in their father's care; but the children of the heavenly Father too often have no peace because they are afraid to trust in His care.

What utter folly it all is! For if ever an earthly father was worthy of the confidence of his children, surely much more is our heavenly Father worthy of our confidence. Why it is that so few of His children trust Him can be only because they have not yet found out that He is really their Father; or else that, acknowledging Him as Father, they still never have seen that He is the sort of Father a good and true human father is, a Father Who is loving, and tender, pitiful, and full of kindness toward the helpless beings whom He has brought into existence, and whom He is therefore bound to protect. This sort of Father no one could help trusting; but the strange and far-off Creator,

(see *COMFORT*, page 7856)

15. John 14:8.

16. I John 3:1.

17. I Peter 5:7.



To Enlighten All as to the Secret

by — A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

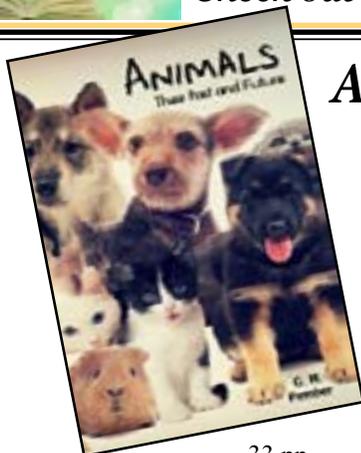
The letter to the Ephesians is an elaboration of the definition of the present secret economy of which Paul became the dispenser.

63 pp.

See [order form](#) under "Knoch."



Check out a **NEW BOOK!**



33 pp.

Animals: Their Past and Future

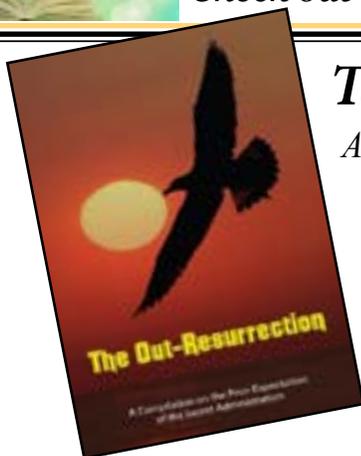
by — G.H. Pember (1837–1910)

This short, yet insightful Scripture study of the animal kingdom is from the author of the classic, *Earth's Earliest Ages*. Although he approaches this subject from the erroneous, traditional teaching of the ‘immortality of the soul,’ which he extends to the animal kingdom, he nonetheless ability dispels other myths and mistranslations that have barred a proper understanding of animals. He correctly contends that both man and animal are *nephesh chaiyah* – “a living soul,” and that resurrection extends to the animal kingdom. In elementary fashion he makes a notable addition to the theme of God’s grand

[See order form under “Other Authors.”](#) plan of redemption that includes animals, by what he calls “the Scriptural proof of the immortality of all God’s creation.” He also stresses the theme of the just treatment of animals, proposing that our current dealings with animals are to be vested, like ours, in their glorious future.



Check out a **NEW BOOK!**



57 pp.

The Out-Resurrection

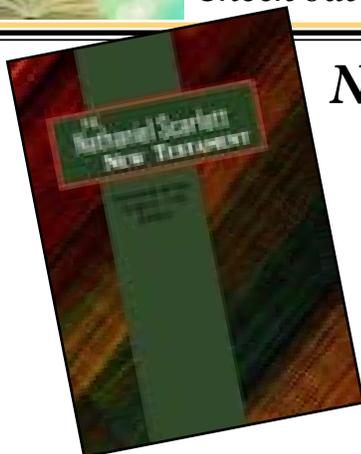
A Compilation on the Prior-Expectation of the Secret Administration

Ours is a prior, pre-expectant resurrection, not revealed before the Secret Administration. When Christ, Who is our life, is manifested on His throne (Colossians 3:4) at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:20) in Glory, far above all Heavens (Ephesians 4:10; 1:21, i.e., in the Super-Heavens), then we, too, will be manifested (appear) with Him there. This work includes four authors: Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr., G.J. Pauptit (1889-1962), Tom L. Ballinger, Stanislas Van Mierlo (1888-1962).

[See order form under “Compilations.”](#)



Check out a **NEW BOOK!**



519 pp.

Nathaniel Scarlett New Testament

Facsimile of the Original 1798 Edition

Translated by Nathaniel Scarlett (1753-1802); Associate Editors: James Creighton (1736–1819), William Vidler (1758-1816), John Cue. A “Universalist” translation. For details see the work cited by Joseph E. Kirk (1903-1974) in the [Bible Student’s Notebook #853](#) “The Triumph of Jesus Christ As Set Forth in the Nathaniel Scarlett Translation of the New Testament.”

[See order form under “Bibles.”](#)



I am done with the reading of Tom Ballinger's "*The Body of Christ*" Is Not the Same as "*The Church Which Is His Body*" in [BSN 925](#). This work is a key to many of my questions in this section of my current study. I am moved by the explanation. In the Theocracy of Grace there is no laity! – **ID**

I appreciate your time writing and sending out the *Daily Email Goodies* and *Bible Student's Notebook*. – **OH**

COMFORT (continued from page 7854)

whose fatherhood stops at our creation, and has no care for our fate after once we are launched into the Universe, no one could be expected to trust.

The remedy, therefore, for discomfort and unrest is to be found in becoming acquainted with the Father.

"For," says the apostle Paul, "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption,¹⁸ whereby we cry, 'Abba, Father.'"¹⁹

18. [Editor:] "Adoption" is the Greek word *huiiothesia* (SEC #5206), meaning the "placing as a son", i.e., "sonship," or "son-placing." It is "the station in life accorded a son" (A.E. Knoch). It is translated "sonship" in the *Concordant, Rotherham, Moffatt* and *Diaglott* ("son-setting" in the *Dabhar*). For more information on this glorious theme see the book entitled [Sonship: A Comprehensive Compilation](#), Bible Student's Press (see the [order form](#) under "Compilations").

19. Romans 8:15.

Tom Ballinger [*"The Body of Christ" Is Not the Same as "The Church Which Is His Body"* – [BSN 925](#)] ... I like the way that this guy writes. No frills and to the point. And what points he makes; a true "diligent" student who has reaped the promised benefit from our Father. This article makes me feel even closer to Christ "our" Head; a gift of understanding that is truly beyond valuation. – **IN**

[BSN 925](#) is a powerhouse issue. It confirmed a lot of things I believed but couldn't find but bits and pieces of information on. "*The Body of Christ*" Is Not the Same as "*The Church Which Is His Body*" by Tom L. Ballinger is a fantastic article and Clyde's footnotes just made it that much better. I loved this issue. – **TN**

I really love your books, you are one writer that comes across as "speaking the truth in love." – **NH** [BSN](#)

*For though there be that are called gods, whether in Heaven or in Earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but **one God, the Father**, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him (I Corinthians 8:5-6).*

(edited abridgement)

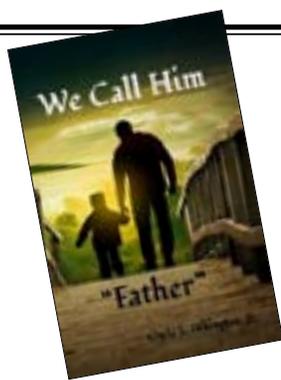
(to be continued)

For a short biographical sketch of Hannah Whitall Smith, see: – Editor's Desk, [Bible Student's Notebook #921](#).

TOPICS:

Major: Comfort; Father; God

Minor: Mother; Responsibility; Standing (of the believer in Christ)



242 pp.

We Call Him "Father"

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

One God and Father of all, Who is over all and through all and in all (Ephesians 4:6, Concordant Version)

Jesus Christ came to reveal God's true identity and nature as "Father." This was an advanced revelation concerning God, super-abounding that of any previous one. With radical boldness Christ called Him "Father," and Paul pressed this glorious truth to its grand ultimate, that God was the "Father of all."

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